

PROGRAM Walter Cronkite, Dimension STATION WCBS
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FULL TEXT

WALTER CRONKITE: "When the founding fathers established this nation, they set forth many of their principles in the Declaration of Independence, one of the most eloquent documents of its kind anywhere.

"The Declaration was signed 190 years ago this coming 4th of July. It contains phrases and propositions that have become an integral part of the way we Americans look at ourselves and our government.

"Among them, a decent respect to the opinions of mankind. We've come a long way since 1776, when John Adams, Thomas Jefferson, Ben Franklin and the others put their names to that document. The development of democracy in the United States has been a model, an inspiration for all the world.

"But recent revelations about the activities of the C.I.A. the Central Intelligence Agency, seem likely to blemish the reputation of our government. Unless changes can be made, it will become apparent that we do not have a decent respect to the opinions of mankind."

"The most recent such revelation concerns the intervention of the C.I.A. in a civil action between two Estonian refugees. One of them, now living in Toronto, has sued the other for slander in Baltimore Federal Court.

"The Toronto man, Erick Hina (?) has a reputation among Estonians as an anti-Communist freedom fighter, but the other Estonian, and the defendant in the case, Juri Raus (?), accused

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mina of being an agent for the K.G.B., the Soviet secret police.

"Now, the C.I.A. has entered the picture. It has presented affidavits that defendant Raus was an agent for the C.I.A. when he made the accusation, and that he did so on orders from the C.I.A.

"The agency also claims immunity for Raus, on grounds that he was working for the C.I.A. And attorneys working for the intelligence agency claim the plaintiff is not entitled to cross-examine officials of the C.I.A., the normal course under the civil code that governs the case.

"The U.S. Attorney General backs up the claims of immunity, and the federal judge in the case concedes those claims probably are valid, based on national security statutes and rulings by the Supreme Court.

"Whatever the merits of either side of the case, it seems clear that a hallowed American judicial practice is being abandoned in the name of national security. And we have only the word of the C.I.A. that national security really is at stake.

"Suppose the C.I.A. were covering up a mistake this way. It's happened before. If that were true -- that's admittedly a big if -- the C.I.A. would be responsible for a monstrous perversion of justice by brushing aside rights and privileges guaranteed under our form of government.

"More on the C.I.A. after this message."

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CRONKITE: "Professor Harry Howe Ransom of Vanderbilt University, who has made a long and intensive study of the C.I.A. points out that the cold war mentality of the C.I.A. tends to ape the adversary, that is, we find ourselves imitating totalitarianism, while attempting to defend ourselves from it. It seems clear that a thorough going Congressional investigation would have great value for the nation.

"This is Walter Cronkite, good-day."